

Critic's Corner

Dr. Robertson Nicholl's admirable "*Life of Ian MacLaren*" has been placed in the Archibald Library. With sympathetic insight the author reveals to us the charming personality of Dr. Watson. This renowned Scot possessed a Celtic temperament marked by patriotism and keen sensitiveness to environment. The latter trait amounted to a weakness. "He simply could not live in a hostile air. For his work he needed the sunny consciousness of sympathy. He could face contradiction and opposition, but not the steady environment of antagonism." He was often attacked by strange fits of depression, but his public ministry and family life were not marred by the appearance of gloom. Dr. Watson was one of those Britons who gave full value to all that is good on this side of the water. His first tour in America was a specially happy event in his life. He was pleased with the entertainment given him at Ottawa, where he was introduced, in a Presbyterian church by Sir Wilfrid Laurier. He took a keen interest in the Presidential election campaign in the United States, which waged during his visit there. The letters, quoted at large, express his humanity, his humor, his courtesy and deep religious faith. John Watson was a college contemporary and life long friend of Henry Drummond and also of James Stalker.

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"*Shakespeare or X?*" not "*Shakespeare or Bacon?*" is the new form of the question regarding the authorship of the Shakespearian plays. That witty and versatile essayist, Mr. Andrew Lang, replies in the September *Cornhill*, to a recent book by G. G. Greenwood, M.P. entitled "*The Shakespeare Problem Restated.*" Mr. Greenwood's attempt is not to enthrone Bacon, but merely to dethrone Shakespeare. He has nothing to say of the "Cryptic rhymes" of Bacon, by means of which Baconians like Edward Bormann are able to prove Bacon the true poet. The end of Mr. Greenwood's criticism is purely negative. "Shakespeare" is a mere pseudonym, we are told, adopted by the great unknown, who is mathematically denoted X; and